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REMARKS

Applicants acknowledge receipt of the Office Action dated May 3, 2007 in which the Examiner objected to the specification because it lacked headings; rejected claims 1, 6, 7, 8 and 18 as anticipated by US Patent 3067801 to Sortor; rejected claims 1-10 as anticipated by US Patent 6352112 to Mills; rejected claims 1, 8, 11 and 12 as anticipated by S.U. Patent 1,745,873 to Kiselman et al.; indicated that claims 13-17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form; and allowed claim 19.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thoroughness of his consideration. Applicants have amended the claims and respectfully traverse the rejections for the reasons set out below.

Objected to the Specification

Applicants have amended the specification so that the section headings correspond to those suggested in Rule 1.77, except that the headings related to joint development agreements, material submitted on a CD, and sequence listing have been omitted as inapplicable in the present case. Applicants believe that, because the items listed in Rule 1.77 are merely guidelines (See MPEP 608.01) and the format and headings of the specification are now in acceptable form.

Rejection of claims 1, 6, 7, 8 and 18 as anticipated by US Patent 3067801 to Sortor

Claim 1 has been amended to require that the expander body is provided with a plurality of circumferentially spaced longitudinal slots, with each slot having first and second ends that are each spaced an axial distance from a respective body end. Sortor does not teach an expander device in which a plurality of longitudinal slots are each spaced apart from the ends of the expander body. Because Sortor depends on pivoting the jaws 54 into an open or expanded position, it would not be possible for the device of Sortor to be within the scope of the amended claims. Therefore, amended claim 1 is neither anticipated by nor obvious in light of Sortor.

Claims 6, 7, 8, and 18 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for the reasons set out above.

Rejection of claims 1-10 as anticipated by US Patent 6352112 to Mills

As discussed in the preceding paragraph, claim 1 has been amended to recite the nature of the slots in the expander body. Mills teaches the use of a conical expander having slots that extend from the large end of the conical body and teaches that the kerf width of the slots allows

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the large end of the body to be compressed. Therefore, Mills does not teach or suggest an expander body in which a plurality of longitudinal slots each have slot ends that are spaced apart from their respective body ends, *i.e.* in which both ends of the expander body are free from slots.

Rejection of claims 1, 8, 11 and 12 as anticipated by S.U. Patent 1,745,873 to Kiselman et al.

As discussed with Mills, amended claim 1 is distinguishable over Kiselman because Kiselman teaches a plurality of separate segments that are not part of the expander body at either end. Therefore, Mills does not teach or suggest an expander body in accordance with the presently amended claims.

Allowable claims

The Examiner indicated that claims 13-17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 13 has been amended to incorporate all of the limitations of claims 1, 8, and 11, from which it formerly depended, and is therefore allowable, as are claims 14-17, which depend from it.

The Examiner allowed claim 19, for which Applicants thank the Examiner.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe that all of the claims are in condition for allowance and favorable consideration by the Examiner is requested. Should the Examiner find any impediment to the prompt allowance of the claims that can be corrected by telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to initiate such an interview with the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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